

**ARCHIVES OF MICHIGAN
GUIDE TO MANUSCRIPT COLLECTIONS**

MS Number: 87-91.

OCLC Number: 71242516

Thurston, Lee M., 1895-1953.

Lee M. Thurston Collection, 1903-1955. Bulk Dates: 1935-1953.

Total Quantity: 3 manuscript boxes, 1 volume, 1 oversize folder (2 cubic feet)

Donor: Robert Thurston

Date: July 14, 1987

Biographical Note

Lee Mohrmann Thurston was born in Central Lake, Michigan, on August 7, 1895. Thurston, the son of George and Lenore Thurston, attended Central Lake public schools, and as a young man worked in his father's print shop. (His father was the editor and publisher of the *Central Lake Torch*.) During World War I, Thurston served in the U.S. Marine Corps. After the War, Thurston received his Bachelor's degree (1918), his Master's degree (1929) and his Ph.D. (1935) from the University of Michigan. All degrees were in the field of education.

Thurston taught in the high schools of Boyne City (1918), Manistee (1920-1922), and Owosso (1922-1926). While teaching in Boyne City prior to the War, he met his wife, Jessie. He married her in Sault Ste. Marie on December 26, 1921. They had two children: Jane Kathleen and Robert Lee.

From 1926 to 1938 Thurston served in various administrative capacities: superintendent (Perry schools), assistant superintendent (Ann Arbor schools), and deputy state superintendent of public instruction. From circa 1938 to 1944, he was a professor of education at the University of Pittsburgh. He returned to the Department of Public Instruction circa 1944. Governor Kim Sigler appointed Thurston the State Superintendent of Public Instruction (1948). A Republican, Thurston was elected to that post in the spring elections of 1949 and 1951. Lee became the United States Commissioner of Education, when Eisenhower appointed him to the newly formed United States Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (1953). Thurston assumed office on July 2, 1953; however, his tenure was short. Lee M. Thurston died in September of 1953¹

Series Summary:

- Series 1. Newspaper Clippings and Ephemera, 1903-1953.
- Series 2. Correspondence, 1935-1953.
- Series 3. Monographs and Speeches, 1935-1953.
- Series 4. Dedication of Lee M. Thurston High School, 1955.
- Series 5. Audiovisual Materials, c. 1948-1953.

¹ Lee M. Thurston Collection, MS 87-91. Archives of Michigan. The Official Who's Who in Michigan, ed. Herbert S. Chase (Munising, Michigan 1936) 394.[http: www.politicalgraveyard.com](http://www.politicalgraveyard.com)

Series 87-91.1

Title: Newspaper Clippings and Ephemera
Dates: 1903-1953. **Bulk Dates:** 1935-1953
Quantity: .5 cubic foot
Arrangement: Chronological

Description: This series contains newspaper clippings, invitations, greeting cards and program brochures. The Thurston family collected these materials in order to commemorate significant events and achievements in the life of Lee M. Thurston. Volume 1 dates 1903-1935. The bulk of the series (1935-1953) consists of newspaper clippings, which increase in volume as Dr. Thurston becomes more prominent. In 1953, Thurston was nominated, and then appointed, United States Commissioner of Education. (Thurston died within two months of this appointment) Many of the program brochures are of school graduations where Dr. Thurston gave the keynote address. The scrapbook contains some greetings cards, and official appointment memoranda mixed in with the newspaper clippings.

Series 87-91.2

Title: Correspondence
Dates: 1935-1953
Quantity: .4 cubic foot
Arrangement: Chronological

Description: This series contains business and personal correspondence to and from Dr. Lee M. Thurston. The record documents his career, including letters requesting that he serve on education boards and committees. This series includes a small percentage of personal notes from family and friends. Most of the letters are typed and on mimeograph paper.

Series 87-91.3

Title: Monographs and Speeches
Dates: 1935-1953
Quantity: .5 cubic foot
Arrangement: Alphabetical by title

Description: These speeches and articles reflect the educational philosophy of Dr. Lee M. Thurston. A few of these monographs are published, but most are in typed, rough draft form. Dr. Thurston was an advocate for outdoor education, moral guidance, advanced education either in the traditional college courses or vocational schools, and the great potential each student has to contribute to society regardless of economic background.

Series 87-91.4

Title: Dedication of Lee M. Thurston High School.
Dates: 1955
Quantity: .1 cubic foot
Arrangement: One folder

Description: Contains a copy of the speech and correspondence surrounding the dedication of the Lee M. Thurston High School in the South Redford School District on

MS 87-91

April 17, 1955. S.M. Brownell, United States Commission of Education, gave the dedication speech.

Series 87-91.5

Title: Audiovisual Materials

Dates: c.1948-1953

Quantity: .5 cubic foot

Arrangement: By format.

Description: Contains portrait photographs of Dr. Lee M. Thurston, group photos of organizations or activities, and one 78 RPM record of a CBS Radio News interview on August 30, 1953. Other than Lee M Thurston, G. Mennen Williams is the only other readily recognized person in any of the group photos. There are 17 photographs including one oversized portrait stored separately from the collection.

| | | | |
|--|---|------------------------------------|--|
| Archives of Michigan Manuscript Collection Location Guide | Location: 69/2/4 Map Case 101, Drawer 23 | Accession No. MS 87-91 | OCLC No. 71242516 |
| | Total Quantity: 3 mss boxes, 1 volume, and 1 oversize folder (2 cubic feet) | Donated By: Robert Thurston | |
| | | Date Received: 7/14/1987 | Date Prepared: 10/12/2005, 12/7/2005 |

Title: Lee M. Thurston Collection, 1903-1953

| Container No. | Description of Manuscript/ Archival Items | Inclusive Dates | Comment |
|----------------------|--|------------------------|----------------|
| | Newspaper Clippings and Ephemera | 1903-1953 | Series 1 |
| Vol.1 | Scrapbook | 1903-1938 | |
| Box 1 | 1935 | 1935 | |
| | 1936 | 1936 | |
| | 1938 | 1938 | |
| | 1939 | 1939 | |
| | 1940 | 1940 | |
| | 1941 | 1941 | |
| | 1942 | 1942 | |
| | 1944 | 1944 | |
| | 1946 | 1946 | |
| | 1947 | 1947 | |
| | 1948 | 1948 | |
| | 1949 | 1949 | |
| | 1950 | 1950 | |
| | 1951 | 1951 | |
| | 1952 | 1952 | |
| | 1953 | 1953 | |

Archives of Michigan

LOCATION GUIDE – (continuation sheet)

Title: Lee M. Thurston Collection

MS No. 87-91

| Container No. | Description of Archival Items | Inclusive Dates | Comment |
|---------------|-------------------------------|------------------|----------|
| | Correspondence | 1935-1953 | Series 2 |
| Box 2 | 1935 | 1935 | |
| | 1936 | 1936 | |
| | 1937 | 1937 | |
| | 1938 | 1938 | |
| | 1939 | 1939 | |
| | 1940 | 1940 | |
| | 1941 | 1941 | |
| | 1942 | 1942 | |
| | 1943 | 1943 | |
| | 1944 | 1944 | |
| | 1945 | 1945 | |
| | 1946 | 1946 | |
| | 1947 | 1947 | |
| | 1948 | 1948 | |
| | 1949 | 1949 | |
| | 1950 | 1950 | |
| | 1951 | 1951 | |
| | 1952 | 1952 | |
| | 1953 | 1953 | |
| | | | |
| | | | |

Archives of Michigan

LOCATION GUIDE – (continuation sheet)

Title: Lee M. Thurston Collection

MS No. 87-91

| Container No. | Description of Archival Items | Inclusive Dates | Comment |
|------------------|--|------------------|----------|
| | Monographs and Speeches | 1935-1953 | Series 3 |
| Box 2 (cont.) | <i>Conditioning the Mind for Peace</i> | 1943 | |
| | "The Contributions of Camping to Tomorrow's World" | 1952 | |
| | <i>Defense of Superintendents</i> | Ca.1950 | |
| | "Education—A Discipline and a Profession" | 1953 | |
| | "Education for All American Youth—A Further Look" | 1952 | |
| | <i>Forest is Our Classroom</i> | Ca.1950 | |
| | "The Function of the School Unit" | 1936 | |
| | "Greetings to the 1952 Graduate" | 1952 | |
| | <i>Higher Education and the Schools of the State</i> | 1948 | |
| | <i>How can High Schools and Colleges Agree on a Plan for College Admission...?</i> | 1950 | |
| | <i>Inside the Capitol Dome</i> | 1952 | |
| | <i>Labor Day</i> | 1953 | |
| | <i>Leadership in Local School System</i> | Ca.1950 | |
| | "Looking Forward in Teacher Education" | 1950 | |
| | <i>Michigan Education and the Present Crisis</i> | 1950 | |
| | "Michigan High Schools and their Camping Activities" | 1950 | |
| | "Moral and Spiritual Values in the Public Schools" | 1951 | |
| | <i>New Schools for Rural America</i> | 1950 | |
| | <i>Our Education Needs</i> | 1949 | |
| | "Outdoor Education as an Integral Part of the School Curriculum" | 1950 | |
| | <i>Politics, Lets Talk</i> | 1943 | |

Archives of Michigan

LOCATION GUIDE – (continuation sheet)

Title: Lee M. Thurston Collection

MS No. 87-91

| Container No. | Description of Archival Items | Inclusive Dates | Comment |
|---------------|--|------------------|---------|
| | Monographs and Speeches (continued) | 1935-1953 | |
| Box 2 | "The Political, Economic, and Social Basis of Our American Public School System" | Ca.1950 | |
| | <i>Post War School Plant Finance</i> | 1944 | |
| | <i>Progress Through Leadership Rather Than Controls</i> | 1951 | |
| Box 3 | <i>Public Schools in American Democracy</i> | 1952 | |
| | <i>Public School Interiors</i> | 1939 | |
| | <i>Radio, an Important Social Invention</i> | Ca.1950 | |
| | "Relating the Rural School to Life Problems" | 1949 | |
| | <i>The Role of Education in the Development of the American Way of Life</i> | 1952 | |
| | <i>School Finance</i> | 1948 | |
| | <i>Should be Beautiful</i> | 1939 | |
| | <i>State Aid for Construction</i> | 1939 | |
| | "Strange Bridge Hands" | 1950 | |
| | "Tale of Two Towns" | Ca.1950 | |
| | "Teachers Code of Ethics" | 1935 | |
| | <i>Teaching Through Environment</i> | Ca.1940 | |
| | <i>Teaching as a Profession</i> | 1950 | |
| | "Teenagers" | Ca.1950 | |
| | <i>Then and Now in Michigan Education</i> | 1950 | |
| | "They Grow Up Only Once" | 1949 | |
| | "The Thompson Plan" | Ca.1940 | |
| | "What are the Functions and Values of public Education in a Democratic Society?" | Ca.1945 | |

